

Grade 6 SS/ELA
Unit 2 River Valley Civilizations Lesson 3

Name: _____

What Do Laws Tell Us About a Society? Part 2

Directions: Read the Bill of Rights and Read laws below. Some appear in the Constitution of the United States; some come from Supreme Court decisions.

- The government cannot restrict freedom of speech unless the speech presents a clear and present danger of violence or some other evil that the government has a right to prevent.
- A newspaper cannot be punished for untrue statements about a public official unless it deliberately published a falsehood.
- An accused person must be informed of his or her constitutional rights, including the right to remain silent, before being questioned.
- The states must provide free legal counsel to any person accused of a misdemeanor (less serious crime) that involves a jail term, if the person cannot afford a lawyer.
- Excessive bail cannot be required, nor excessive fines imposed, nor cruel and unusual punishments inflicted.
- The right of citizens of the United States to vote shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any state on account of race, color or previous condition of servitude.

4. Are laws from the Code of Hammurabi and the United States laws above alike in any way? How?

5. How are ideas about punishment in our country today different from the way they were in Hammurabi's time?

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6. Have ideas about equality changed since Hammurabi's time? If so, how?
